



Donations Management

Support Annex

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

This annex provides guidance on the Federal role in Donations Management in a major disaster or emergency. Any reference to donated goods and services in this annex means *unsolicited* goods and *unaffiliated* volunteer services.

1. State and local governments have primary responsibility for the management of unsolicited goods and unaffiliated volunteers.
2. The Federal Government supports State and local governments and voluntary organizations in establishing a system to manage and control donated goods and services. The system will provide a method for any potential donor to consult and negotiate with donations specialists prior to the collection and sending of goods and volunteers.

B. Scope

This guidance applies to all agencies with direct and indirect donations responsibilities under the Federal Response Plan (FRP).

II. Policies

- A. Full use of existing voluntary organization donations management resources is encouraged before the assistance of the Federal or State governments is sought.
- B. The role of the Federal Government is always in support of the disaster-affected State and local governments. State and local governments, in coordination with voluntary organizations active in disaster, are ultimately in charge of Donations Management.
- C. Federal and State governments look principally to those voluntary organizations with established donations structures already in place to receive and deliver appropriate donated goods to disaster victims.
- D. Necessary response activities for Donations Management that may be undertaken by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) before a Presidential declaration will be closely coordinated with State officials.
- E. The Federal Government encourages cash donations to recognized nonprofit voluntary organizations with disaster experience.

- F. The Federal Government encourages individuals interested in volunteering their personal services to affiliate with a recognized nonprofit voluntary organization to facilitate their involvement in disaster relief activities.

III. Planning Assumptions

- A. Donations management response activities are necessary before a Presidential disaster declaration and hence require rapid coordination to mitigate potential donations problems in the response phase of disaster operations.
- B. In the event of a disaster causing large-scale loss of life and destruction of property, donors (both domestic and foreign) will offer assistance of virtually any kind, including cash, goods, equipment and loan of equipment, and the services of individuals.
- C. Offers of assistance will be made directly to all levels of government — Federal, State, and local — as well as to voluntary organizations.
- D. In less-than-large-scale or “high-visibility” disasters, Donations Management will be handled by voluntary organizations with or without Federal or State involvement.

IV. Concept of Operations

A. General

- 1. Management of donations requires a cooperative effort by Federal, State, and local governments; voluntary and community-based organizations; the business sector; and the media.
- 2. FEMA supports the State Donations Coordinator and voluntary organizations. The affected State and local governments, in conjunction with their voluntary organization partners, are in charge of developing donations management plans and managing the flow of goods and services during disaster response and recovery operations.
- 3. Federal support provided by FEMA (as the Federal coordinating agency for Donations Management) and other Federal agencies may include:
 - a. Enhanced voluntary organization coordination;
 - b. Assistance in establishing a Donations Coordination Team and a Donations Coordination Center;
 - c. Technical and managerial support;
 - d. A national network of information and contacts to assist donations specialists in the field; and
 - e. Donations management software and communications support as necessary.

B. National-Level Responsibilities

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency

- a. Make early contact with the key Donations Coordinators of the national voluntary organizations and the affected region for donations situation assessment;
- b. Based on the affected region's request for assistance, provide donations program guidance, a Donations Coordinator, and other assistance as appropriate;
- c. Continue to provide support and assistance to the field, especially regarding international offers of assistance, large corporate offers, or politically sensitive collection drives; and
- d. With the appropriate Federal agencies, coordinate international offers of assistance that meet acceptance criteria established by the affected State and FEMA.

2. Department of State

The Department of State, Office of Diplomatic Contingency Programs (DOS-A/DCP), serves as the conduit to all American embassies and consulates worldwide, providing them with information on FEMA, State, and voluntary organization policies and procedures on donated goods and services.

- a. As required, coordinate all actions and special issues with related agencies (e.g., Agency for International Development, U.S. Information Agency) concerning foreign offers of assistance and special requirements;
- b. Serve as the coordinating agency on DOS actions for domestic disasters under the FRP;
- c. Inform the Emergency Support Team (EST) donations specialist of offers being made by foreign governments and provide assistance as necessary; and
- d. Coordinate with the EST donations specialist to ensure that all foreign donors receive acknowledgment of the assistance they provide.

3. Department of the Treasury, U.S. Customs Service

In coordination with the EST donations specialist and DOS-A/DCP, expedite the entry of approved donated items into the United States.

4. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service

In coordination with the EST donations specialist and DOS-A/DCP as necessary, expedite the entry of approved individuals into the United States.

C. Regional-Level Responsibilities

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency

- a. On establishment of a Regional Operations Center, the region designates a point of contact for donations at that facility.

- b. At the State Emergency Operations Center, other State facility, or Disaster Field Office, the FEMA Donations Coordinator *assists* the State Donations Coordinator as needed in:
 - (1) Establishing a Donations Coordination Team;
 - (2) Setting up a Donations Coordination Center, including a donations hotline;
 - (3) Ensuring that the appropriate donations receiving and distribution facilities are established and operating effectively;
 - (4) Coordinating with FEMA-State Emergency Information and Media Affairs staff on public service announcements, press releases, and other media-related support;
 - (5) Coordinating with FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL), congressional affairs, community relations, logistics, Defense Coordinating Officer, and other Federal agencies as necessary; and
 - (6) Preparing input for situation reports, briefings, and VIP visits as necessary.

2. Department of Transportation

- a. Arrange for transportation as necessary;
- b. Provide information on transportation routes; and
- c. Provide guidance and support on transportation rules, regulations, and requirements as needed.

3. Department of Defense

Provide logistical support and other resources as needed and available.

4. General Services Administration

Provide supplies, services, equipment, and facilities as needed.

V. Reference

The Donations Management Guidance Manual (FEMA 278) includes information on preparedness and planning, checklists, standard operating procedures, donations management flow diagrams, public information materials, and voluntary organization points of contact.

VI. Terms and Definitions

A. Donations Coordination Center

Facility from which the Donations Coordination Team operates. It is best situated in or close by the State Emergency Operations Center for coordination purposes. It must have enough rooms for a phone bank, processing by team members of calls from prospective donors, and negotiating the shipping and receiving of needed items.

B. Donations Coordination Team

A Donations Coordination Team is made up of representatives of voluntary organizations and State and local governments who have a vested interest in the effective management of unsolicited donated goods and voluntary services. The team is managed by the State emergency management agency. Its mission is to implement the State Donations Management Plan, with the aim of keeping unneeded goods and services out of the disaster area.

C. FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL)

Each FEMA region has, and FEMA offices in Hawaii and Puerto Rico have, a FEMA VAL. There is also a VAL at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, MD. The VAL is responsible for providing advice on voluntary organization coordination and assisting States in developing State Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). In disaster operations, the VAL assists the local leadership in convening broad-based meetings at which voluntary organizations, FEMA, and the State share information about the status of response and recovery activities.

D. In-Kind Donations

Donations other than cash (usually materials or professional services) for disaster survivors.

E. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)

NVOAD is the umbrella organization of established and experienced voluntary organizations that provide disaster services in all phases of emergency management. NVOAD fosters cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration among voluntary organizations. It also encourages close working partnerships among voluntary organizations and government at all levels. It is not operational as an organization.

F. Unaffiliated Volunteer

Also known as a “spontaneous” or “emergent” volunteer; an individual who is not formally associated with a recognized voluntary disaster relief organization.

G. Undesignated Goods

Largely unsolicited, donated items that are not addressed to a specific recipient.

H. Unsolicited Goods

Donated items that have not been requested by government officials, voluntary disaster relief organizations, or other donations-related personnel.

I. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

VOAD is a coalition of voluntary organizations organized at State and local levels. In nondisaster periods, it meets to discuss emergency management issues and encourage cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration among voluntary organizations. In the response period, each individual organization functions independently, yet cooperatively.

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